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SUBJECT: DPRK: COMMITTEE BLESSES PANEL OF EXPERTS SLATE

Classified By: Amb. Alejandro D. Wolff, for reasons 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On August 7, the DPRK Sanctions Committee ("1718 Committee") blessed a seven-person slate for the Panel of Experts (POE), a newly-established body under UNSCR 1874 charged with helping the Committee monitor and improve the implementation of sanctions on the DPRK. The Secretary-General will now move to formally appoint these experts. The final slate includes representatives from the P-5 plus Japan and Republic of Korea (ROK); they include experts in nuclear and regional issues, WMD proliferation, finance, customs and export control, and missile technology. Committee approval had been stalled since mid-July due to Costa Rican and Mexican protests over equitable geographic distribution; these concerns were eventually overcome through an agreement to support a Latin American candidate for the Sudan POE. The Secretariat is now finalizing logistics, such as salaries, office location and budget. The POE will probably not be assembled in time to submit an interim report to the Security Council by September 12, as requested in resolution 1874. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) On August 7, the DPRK Sanctions Committee ("1718 Committee") blessed a slate of seven candidates to compose the UN Panel of Experts (POE) responsible for monitoring and improving the implementation of DPRK sanctions imposed in resolutions 1718 and 1874. Resolution 1874 requested the Secretary-General "to create for an initial period of one year, in consultation with the Committee, a group of up to seven experts." As part of its consultations with the Committee, the Secretariat shared its proposed slate with the Committee on August 3 under a five-day no objection deadline. Now that Committee consultations are complete -- and no objections were raised -- the Secretary-General will formally appoint these experts in a letter to the Security Council no later than August 14.

¶3. (C) The final slate (see para 9) includes nationals of all P-5 countries plus Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK). The experts boast a range of expertise in nuclear and regional issues, WMD proliferation, finance, customs and export control, and missile technology. The U.S. expert, Victor Comras, is a retired Foreign Service Officer (FSO) who led the State Department's foreign policy trade control programs for nearly a decade and has extensive experience on Yugoslav and al-Qaida/Taliban sanctions.

¶4. (C) Committee approval of the slate of experts had been stalled since mid-July as a result of Mexican and Costa Rican complaints about the POE's makeup. These delegations asserted in Committee meetings that a POE composed only of the P-5 plus Japan and ROK undermined the UN's commitment to equitable geographic representation and they privately hinted that they would block slates that only included "the most interested states." Mexico and Costa Rica also primed Burkina Faso, Libya and Uganda to echo these points. (NOTE: The Secretariat typically composes expert panels primarily on the

basis of expertise needed while also giving due regard to geographic and gender diversity. Because of the unique politics of the DPRK issue, the P-5, Japan and ROK all insisted that they have a slot on the POE. END NOTE). The Secretariat was unwilling to move forward with a slate until it was clear that no Committee member would object.

¶5. (C) To overcome Mexican and Costa Rican concerns, the P-3 plus Japan and ROK agreed to address equitable geographical distribution in other UN sanctions expert panels. In particular, Mexico and Costa Rica were encouraged to put forth a Latin American candidate for the Sudan POE, whose contracts come up for renewal in September. This outcome was also acceptable for Burkina Faso, Uganda and Libya.

DPRK POE: IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

¶6. (C) On August 5, Francesca Jannotti Pecci of the UN Secretariat's Subsidiary Organs branch, told USUN that the Secretariat will need an additional 3-4 weeks to complete the administrative tasks needed to support the POE. These tasks include finalizing the contracts and salaries for the experts and finding office space in New York. Pecci explained that a budget of \$1.709 million had been approved for the POE. This initial budget includes funds for POE travel to Member States and the support of two political officers and admin staff.

¶7. (C) Pecci noted that the Secretariat was leaning towards choosing the UK expert as coordinator of the group on the basis of his perceived "political neutrality." As coordinator, the UK expert would be the primary point person for the POE and its public face.

¶8. (C) Due to the delays in Committee approval and time needed to make logistical arrangements, Pecci noted that the POE is unlikely to be able to submit to the Security Council an interim report by September 12, as requested in resolution ¶1874. The chair of the Committee may note this in his regularly-scheduled 90-day briefing to the Security Council in late August and suggest a short extension of the deadline.

¶9. (SBU) FINAL SLATE OF DPRK PANEL OF EXPERTS:

-- Mr. Mashiko Asado, Japan (Nuclear Issues): Chairman of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy Study Committee for the Japanese Atomic Energy Agency in 2005.

-- Mr. David J. Birch, UK (WMD Proliferation): P4 level officer for the Weapons of Mass Destruction branch of the UN in 2008.

-- Mr. Victor D. Comras, US (Finance): Led the U.S. State Department's foreign policy trade control and sanctions programs for nearly a decade; retired FSO; served on the UN's 1267 al-Qaeda/Taliban Monitoring Team.

-- Ms. Xiaohong Dang, China (Export Control, Nuclear Items): Currently the Director of the Department of Customs Control and Inspection.

-- Mr. Erik Marzolf, France (Missile Technology): Ministry of Defense representative at the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) plenary meetings from 2005-2008.

-- Mr. Young-wan Song, ROK (Regional Issues): Director-General for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in ROK in 2006.

-- Mr. Alexander Vilnin, Russia (Customs): Currently Senior Counselor in the Department for Security Affairs and Disarmament.

//END FINAL SLATE OF DPRK PANEL OF EXPERTS//
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